



Interview

The Dignified Self & Güntsche Concepts

Lilian Güntsche, CEO & Founder

Prior to the Rethink! ITEM Europe 2016 – IT & Digital Enterprise Minds – Driving Digital Business conference, we.CONECT talked with Lilian Güntsche, CEO & Founder at The Dignified Self & Güntsche Concepts.



THE DIGNIFIED SELF
 MINDFULNESS IN THE TECHNOLOGY AGE

Lilian Güntsche has been working in the digital and tech business for over a decade and has been successfully self-employed in her own company Güntsche Concepts for several years, supporting leading brands in the area of digital strategy and mobile marketing. Lilian calls herself a mindful workaholic and she has recently started an initiative for more mindfulness in the technology age, a blog called The Dignified Self.

we.CONECT: At Rethink! ITEM Europe 2016 you will be hosting an Ice Breaker Round Table. Could you give us more insights into your project?

Lilian Güntsche:

My topic is mindfulness in the technology age, which is the mission of THE DIGNIFIED SELF. The title is: "From Selfie to Self. How can we secure a human-first approach in digital transformation and what is the importance of mindfulness in the technology age?"

The Dignified Self understands itself as a movement for more humanity in a technology dominated world, for peace in the acceleration and for the personal touch in an externally driven environment. The Dignified Self puts its focus on self-knowledge through intuition; whereas The Quantified Self is self-knowledge through numbers.

The question of how to use technology mindfully is a big topic today. Despite of working in tech and being a digital advisor, I follow a human-first approach. I believe The Dignified Self touches topics relevant for anyone - individuals as well as businesses: Individually, in terms of learning to reconnect with ourselves again (and not just with our smartphones) and how to focus more on the current moment and not only live in a virtual, technology dominated world.

Company related in terms of the influence digital transformation has on leadership, emotional intelligence and

the future of work as well as the new responsibility of companies towards their employees evolving around it. Manager magazines have already featured our initiative and more and more businesses reach out to us. We are currently developing concepts and potential solutions to further establish mindfulness in the business world. Sharing different takes on mindfulness in the technology age on our blog at thedignifiedself.com is already a part of that. Also I'll be publishing a book on modern mindfulness in Germany this year.

we.CONECT: What do you understand under the term "digital transformation" and what are according to your opinion the main chances and challenges that digitalisation brings along?

Lilian Güntsche:

I define digital transformation as the needed process of change as a result of digital technology. I believe digital transformation delivers great chances as well as challenges. It is a question of how open we respond to change in general and to the re-evaluation of prior belief systems. I see a challenge in the increasing rate of acceleration and higher amount of noise and distraction. I believe always-on has its limits. Also I see challenges in regards to emotional intelligence - with artificial intelligence (AI) evolving. Also the preservation of human connection and ethics is at stake. I see great chances

though for personal development, new life-concepts and communication channels to gain from with time-and place independency. I see a rise of more mindfulness and humanity in society, as well as even more disruptive new business models for companies.

we.CONECT: From your own point of view, how does an interconnected world look like? How do you see the next 5 years evolving?

Lilian Güntsche:

I see a lot more Artificial intelligence, Internet of things, Digital Health and virtual reality solutions. Robots in the work environment will have become normal. People will be highly connected and technology will even more have become a part of our life and augments the self. We won't be limited to gadgets or devices that much anymore. The internet will be everywhere and in all things. Gesture navigation will be way more advanced as well as augmented reality, including holographic solutions. Also I see a revolution growing in society to over-connected, externally driven times. People will be much more sensitive of their data and privacy. They will more mindfully disconnect from time to time and reconnect with their creativity, value systems and freedom. Technology is here to help us, not to control us. This will be a major line to remember in 5 years from now. It is



important to cultivate a human-first perspective now to secure that. This includes mindfulness.

we.CONECT: What are your main interests in the IT and Digital sector?

Lilian Güntsche:

I believe technology can augment our lives (“augmented self”). Thus, I am mainly interested in any digital solutions that are user-centred. This potentially includes anything that supports us to make our life easier, happier and better (e.g. mobile health, mobile education, internet of things, as well as located-based and discovery-related services). The concepts, apps and gadgets evolving around, what I call “mobile mindfulness”, meaningful conversation and creativity, are especially close to my heart. Innovations as well as marketing and communication through digital devices, channels and solutions are of course also within my main focus field, as I consult in digital strategy and marketing and believe in the many great opportunities it supplies to the business world today. Anything enabling data management to become more efficient and privacy oriented is also relevant to me.

we.CONECT: What are your expectations from networking sessions at Rethink! ITEM Europe

2016? Are there any particular topics you are most interested to hear presentations on from our community?

Lilian Güntsche:

I expect Rethink! ITE Europe 2016 to be a great gathering of inspirational people. I am honoured to be a part of it. The effects of artificial intelligence & internet of things and what it means for humanity are of high interest for me: How can we use technology to influence our life positively and do something good? Also the ethical side of tech is significant to me: how will machines and self-driving cars decide in critical situations like either hitting a playing kid or a wall? How can we apply ethics and values to robotics? How can we build things that create a better life and future? And what is the role of the human in the technology age? I believe these are highly relevant topics we should all be focussed on right now. At least sometimes. If we want change, we need to start with ourselves. This brings us back to mindfulness.

we.CONECT: Thank you for your cooperation and the insights you shared with us!

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